

Proclamation 5794 of April 11, 1988

John Muir Day, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

April 21 is the 150th Anniversary of the birth of John Muir, naturalist, explorer, conservationist, author, champion of the American wilderness, and proponent of national parks. This Sesquicentennial Celebration reminds us of our debt to this native of Scotland who traversed our country, our continent, and the world to study and describe mountain and forest and glacier and glade, and who left us a vision of utmost respect for the wilderness and all it embodies.

After studying at the University of Wisconsin and revealing an aptitude for mechanical invention, Muir decided to embark on "the study of the inventions of God"—in the "university of the wilderness." Both observant and eloquent, he began journeys and journal-keeping to investigate nature. Success as a horticulturalist near Martinez, California, gave him the wherewithal to travel and study for a lifetime. He walked throughout his beloved Golden State, all America, and many other lands to record his observations and wrote books and articles on natural phenomena and especially on the forests he loved.

John Muir understood, and helped others to see, the significance and beauty of the wilderness—and to realize that it should be protected for future generations. The establishment of our tremendous national park system, and the practice of sound conservation policies by industry, government, and private citizens, owe much to this pioneer, who along with Robert Underwood Johnson led the fight for the creation in 1890 of what is now Yosemite National Park; who in 1903 hosted President Theodore Roosevelt in Yosemite; who wrote, "The forests of America, however slighted by man, must have been a great delight to God; for they were the finest He ever created."

Let all who revere America's natural heritage, and see in it a timeless treasure dependent upon our stewardship, pause on April 21 in grateful remembrance of John Muir, a man who forever expressed his credo in the words, "In God's wildness lies the hope of the world . . ."

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 245, has designated April 21, 1988, as "John Muir Day" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 21, 1988, as John Muir Day, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN